

Where to Find Birds around Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula

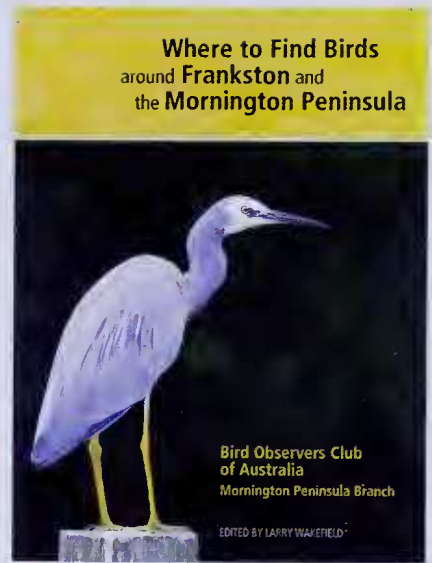
edited by Larry Wakefield

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In 2005, the Bird Observers Club of Australia (now Bird Observation & Conservation Australia) celebrated its centenary year. To mark this occasion, the Mornington Peninsula Branch of the Club (PENBOC) decided to produce a bird locality guide for the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, for use by visitors, residents and all bird-watchers, whether novice or experienced. This project was successfully completed in December 2006.

It is clear that much careful thought has gone into producing this book. It is attractively presented, with one painting and 75 photographs of birds sprinkled through the informative text. A short introduction is followed by a large clear map showing 22 birding localities, 10 of which are labelled as outstanding. This is followed by 'Habitats and Bird Assemblages', in which seven types of habitat are described and accompanied by lists of birds likely to be present. Habitat types are colour-coded throughout the book; for example, if the text is on a blue background, you are looking at 'wetlands' information.

The main part of the book describes the localities. These are grouped according to habitat type, starting with the 'forest-woodland' sites. For each locality, a section of the relevant Melway map, along with map number, notes about access, facilities available, and the name and telephone number of the Reserve Manager are supplied, together with a description of the reserve or park and the walking track, and the names of birds to watch out for. Three tours, each taking in three or four of the localities – including at least two outstanding ones – are suggested.



Other topics covered include recent bird arrivals, threatened birds, bird-watching tips, and responsible bird-watching. Contact information for bird-watching organisations and parks and reserves management is supplied on the back cover. There is a comprehensive bird list of 213 (not 214 as stated) regulars and 86 vagrants. Alarming, little more than a third of the regulars are listed as common, and even some of those are said to be vulnerable. As many as four species may already be extinct in the area.

Only a few of the photos bear the photographer's name. Although acknowledgements are made, it would have been better to include the photographer's name on each photo. It should also be mentioned that the Department of Sustainability and Environment's 'Victorian Bird Atlas' referred to in this book is actually the database Atlas of Victorian Wildlife.

Hopefully, this book will increase awareness of the value of birds, and encourage preservation and restoration of their habitats. Congratulations to PENBOC for producing such an appealing, compact and useful birding guide. It is a pleasure to recommend this book to all who visit the Mornington Peninsula.

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